

EPA Region III

Office of Public Affairs

EARLY BIRD HEADLINES

Friday, March 30, 2012

*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

High Methane in Pennsylvania Water Deemed Safe by EPA

BLOOMBERG NEWS SERVICE Tests by the Environmental Protection Agency of water in Dimock, Pennsylvania, found elevated levels of methane consistent with leakage from gas drilling nearby, according to scientists who reviewed the data. Results from the first 11 wells tested by the EPA found one with a methane level of 52 parts per million, which could be explosive, and at least three others above the state standard of 7 milligrams per liter, according to Ronald Bishop, a chemist at the State University of New York's College at Oneonta. The findings raise questions about the EPA's March 15 statement to Dimock residents that their water didn't pose a health risk, Bishop said. "They sprang too early with these results, and in telling people their water is safe," Bishop said in an interview. "I'm used to seeing better from them." ...The EPA notified state and local officials after finding the one well with levels of methane exceeding 28 parts per million, which is the maximum amount of methane than can be dissolved in water before it will leave as a gas, said Terri White, a spokeswoman for the EPA in Philadelphia. "Methane is not explosive while in solution," White said in an e-mail. "Methane in water does not impair the odor, taste or color, nor does it affect in anyway the potability of the water." Bishop hypothesizes that the gas gurgling into wells may be kicking up mud that is leading to the unpleasant odor and taste residents such as Sautner complain about. Robert Poreda, a professor of earth and environmental sciences at the University of Rochester, and his colleagues have tested their own 50 samples in the area since November and have found similar results to the EPA's, he said. Methane levels may be even higher than the agency's estimates, because the gas can escape if samples aren't drawn carefully, he said in an interview. "If this were natural, why hasn't their house blown up?" he said.

Seven communities file suit to oppose Marcellus Shale law

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE HARRISBURG - Seven municipalities that banded together in recent weeks to oppose Pennsylvania's Marcellus Shale gas-drilling law filed a suit Thursday, challenging whether the state is authorized to supersede local regulation of drilling. The municipalities are Yardley and Nockamixon in Bucks County and five southwestern Pennsylvania towns. They were joined in the suit by a Monroeville doctor, environmental activists from the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, and a handful of municipal officials contesting the law in their personal capacities. The 117-page suit, filed in Commonwealth Court in Harrisburg, names as defendants Environmental Protection Secretary Michael Krancer, Attorney General Linda Kelly, and Robert Powelson, who chairs the Public Utility Commission. The bill Gov. Corbett signed into law on Feb. 14 tasks Powelson and other PUC officials with determining whether local ordinances governing natural-gas drilling fit into the allowable parameters laid out in the new law. Along with imposing a fee on gas extraction, the law sets statewide standards for such issues as where wells can be drilled. It allows drillers to challenge any local ordinances that are more stringent than the state standard. The suit argues that standardizing zoning rules for gas drilling is "an improper and arbitrary use of the commonwealth's police power." The municipal officials contended they "will be left to plan around rather than plan for orderly growth" in their communities. "By crafting a single set of statewide zoning rules applicable to oil and gas drilling throughout the commonwealth, the Pennsylvania General Assembly provided much sought-after predictability for the oil and gas development industry," the suit said.

Editorial: Gas pipelines remain a threat

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Even though a congressman boasts that his bill signed into law in January will assure steps are taken to safeguard new shale-gas pipelines snaking across Pennsylvania, safety regulators surveyed nationally say they still need convincing. The state regulators' fears, expressed to federal auditors about the public-safety threat from badly built or shoddily maintained pipelines, stand as a continuing concern for residents living amid Pennsylvania's gas boom. At issue is whether thousands of miles of pipeline stretched across rural areas will be subject to safety checks to safeguard against flaws or lax upkeep, given that federal law now exempts these lines from safety rules. After an Inquirer series last year exposed the shortcomings in rural pipeline oversight, Rep. Bill Shuster (R., Pa.) ushered through a bill that will add a handful of inspectors nationwide, provide new scrutiny to older pipelines, and double safety violation fines to \$2 million. "We worked hard to strengthen the enforcement of current laws and to fill gaps in existing laws where necessary," Shuster said. But a new report from the research arm of Congress, the General Accounting Office, concludes that federal regulators need to step up their game when it comes to tracking the network of so-called feeder pipelines being built to ferry shale-gas from 3,000 wells in Pennsylvania and elsewhere. Under current law, backed by industry lobbyists, there are miles of pipeline exempt from inspection because they run through less-populated regions. The industry's position is that it makes no sense to field inspectors in areas that one lobbyist characterized as the "far hinterland," inasmuch as the risk of an explosion is lower than in urban areas, and pipeline companies have an economic incentive to maintain lines in good working order. That's going to be of less and less comfort, though, to state residents seeing an influx of shale-gas operations, with the prospect that up to 25,000 miles of pipeline could be built in their communities. It's troubling, for starters, that the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration doesn't exercise its authority to track the locations or safety records of the feeder lines. The GAO report seized on that, and recommended - albeit tentatively - that the U.S. Department of Transportation collect basic data on the pipelines as a means to address safety threats. That should be the minimum step taken, though the idea is getting pushback from industry warnings about undue burdens on pipeline firms.

Radioactive iodine in Phila. water tied to thyroid patients

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Government officials have now confirmed what they strongly suspected a year ago: The radioactive iodine-131 in some of the region's waterways, also found in minute amounts in Philadelphia's drinking water, is coming from thyroid patients. After patients swallow the chemical in capsule or liquid form, some of it passes into their urine, which then enters the wastewater-treatment system and winds up in rivers that provide drinking water, the officials said. Philadelphia's water is safe, according to officials from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the state Department of Environmental Protection, the Philadelphia Water Department, and the city Department of Health. They said levels of iodine-131 have remained well below federal drinking-water limits. The substance has a half-life of eight days, which means that every eight days, the radioactivity is reduced by half. It would be considered gone after 80 days. Iodine-131's presence, they said, is likely a new reality of modern medicine. "The goal is zero. We can't get to that," said David Allard, director of the DEP's Bureau of Radiation Protection. According to the Water Department, one person receiving iodine-131 treatment would excrete enough of the substance to be measurable in the watershed. "This is an issue that is not going to go away any time soon," said Caroline Johnson, a physician with the Philadelphia Department of Health. "These are very effective treatments." Officials here discovered the problem when they increased sampling after Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant, crippled in the post-quake tsunami, released radioactivity last March.

Explosion at natural gas compressor station

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALLENTOWN, Pa. - An explosion at a natural gas compressor station in northeastern Pennsylvania sent black smoke into the air Thursday, alarming residents but causing no injuries. The state Department of Environmental Protection said there was a small natural gas leak from the Lathrop compressor station in Springville Township, Susquehanna County, about 30 miles northwest of Scranton, but that air-quality testing showed no problems in the surrounding area. DEP was alerted to the explosion around 11:30 a.m. "I heard a big boom," said Burton Miller, 53, who lives in a mobile home up the street. "It shook the trailer so bad." Vera Scroggins, an anti-drilling activist who lives in the area, said she saw thick clouds of black smoke billowing from the site. Helen Humphreys, a spokeswoman for compressor station owner Williams Partners LP, said there was a fire. The compressor station pressurizes natural gas taken from the Marcellus Shale formation for movement along the pipeline system. "Once it's safe to return to the station, we'll begin a thorough investigation into the cause and determine precisely what

happened. Right now our top priority is to ensure that everybody is safe, making sure they stay safe, and working with the first responders," Humphreys said. DEP spokeswoman Colleen Connolly said there were no reports of injuries. She said a fire department from South Abington Township, Lackawanna County, was called in to spray a foaming agent onto the site. Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. sold the Lathrop station, another compressor station and 75 miles of gathering pipelines to Williams for \$150 million in 2010. Williams has since built a 32-mile pipeline connecting Lathrop to its Transco interstate pipeline

Editorial: Dirty water

FREDERICKSBURG FREELANCE STAR THOSE WHO advocate clean waterways need not be concerned that their work will soon be done. Such is the thrust of the state Department of Environmental Quality's 2012 version of the "impaired waters" list for Virginia. That's not to say ongoing efforts aren't producing some improvement. According to DEQ, some 260 miles of rivers and streams and 2,700 acres of lakes have been removed from the soiled-waters list, meaning they now fully meet water-quality standards. Conversely, about 13,140 miles of rivers and streams, 94,000 acres of lakes and reservoirs, and 2,130 square miles of estuaries remain unclean. That includes the 840 miles of streams added this year, which offset the gains and then some. Many more miles and acres require more research for a fair assessment. Locally, residents should be aware that many tributaries to the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers are on the list, meaning that their ability to support aquatic life is compromised and that they could pose risks for shell-fishing and swimming. E. coli bacteria, which indicates the presence of human and animal waste, makes portions of Aquia Creek and other local streams unsuitable for recreation. Mercury has been found in the tissue of fish in Motts Run Reservoir; mercury and PCBs (carcinogenic polychlorinated biphenyls) in Lake Anna's finned denizens.

Md. Bans Swimming, Fishing, Kayaking In Patapsco River Due To Sewage Spill

WJZ-TV BALTIMORE (CBS) Tens of millions of gallons. That's how much raw sewage has flowed into the Patapsco River this week. Alex DeMetrick reports on how the spill happened and the effects downstream. Raw sewage flooded the inside of a Baltimore County pumping station Sunday night. "The weld on the pipe failed and allowed approximately an 8 inch to 12 inch hole to come into the pumping station," said Edward C. Adams, Jr., director of the Baltimore County Department of Public Works (DPW). "We had to kick off the pumps, we had to let the overflow occur to basically save the integrity of the station." When that happened, sewage flowed unchecked into the Patapsco River for the next four days. "We're estimating, right now, 55 million gallons," Adams said. It was finally stopped when a temporary network of new pipes called a "pump around" bypassed the station, reconnecting a massive 84 inch line which carries the sewage to the Patapsco treatment plant. This isn't the first time this pumping station has had big problems. Last year, after Hurricane Irene blew through the state, parts of that same pipeline blew out. It happened when power to the station was lost. Now, as then, warning signs went up and parts of the Chesapeake Bay are again off-limits to shellfish harvesting. But with oyster season ending Friday, the ban is not expected to create much financial loss. But residue from the spill is still flowing downstream, despite work crews. "Putting the quickest possible fix to stop the overflow," Adams said. ...While saving the station's very expensive pumps. Until the Department of the Environment declares the Patapsco safe, activities like swimming, fishing and kayaking are not allowed.

EPA rulings bring sharp criticism from region's lawmakers

BLUEFIELD DAILY TELEGRAPH (Wednesday) BLUEFIELD — The region's congressional delegation in Washington responded Tuesday with sharp criticism of new Environmental Protection Agency rules that could effectively prevent new coal-fired power plants from being constructed. "It makes no sense at all, it really makes no sense," U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., said of the EPA carbon pollution standards for new power plants. "You have people shooting at you at every end, and every time you turn around they are discounting coal." Manchin said the new EPA rules are further proof of the administration's war on coal. Manchin said the new rules could stop the construction of new coal-fired power plants. "That's their intention, but I'm not accepting that," Manchin said. "Because it is not realistic. All they are going to do is drive the price of (energy) through the sky. It's going to be a

hardship on working families.” Manchin said coal is still responsible for 45 percent of the nation’s energy needs. By 2035, Manchin said coal is still expected to meet 39 percent of the nation’s energy needs. “So you are depending upon an energy source for two decades or more,” Manchin said. “As (Tuesday’s) announcement shows, this EPA is fully engaging in a war on coal, even though this country will continue to rely on coal as an affordable, stable and abundant energy source for decades to come.” U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Va., said Tuesday’s ruling was another example of the Obama’ administration’s efforts to kill coal. “Based upon the technologies we have today, this is the end of coal-fired plants,” Griffith said. “This is just the opening up of a new front on the Obama administration’s war on coal. We have to use our power at the ballot box to defeat Obama himself and his liberal allies.” Griffith said Democrats representing coal-producing states are fighting against the EPA. However, Griffith said a “clear majority of Democrats think coal is a four-lettered word that can’t be used.” “It’s another blow,” Griffith said. “They are trying to do everything they can to cut the legs out from under the American coal industry while our foreign competitors are increasing their use of coal and exports of coal.”

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Editorial: Gas pipelines remain a threat Even though a congressman boasts that his bill signed into law in January will assure steps are taken to safeguard new shale-gas pipelines snaking across Pennsylvania, safety regulators surveyed nationally say they still need convincing. The state regulators' fears, expressed to federal auditors about the public-safety threat from badly built or shoddily maintained pipelines, stand as a continuing concern for residents living amid Pennsylvania's gas boom. At issue is whether thousands of miles of pipeline stretched across rural areas will be subject to safety checks to safeguard against flaws or lax upkeep, given that federal law now exempts these lines from safety rules. After an Inquirer series last year exposed the shortcomings in rural pipeline oversight, Rep. Bill Shuster (R., Pa.) ushered through a bill that will add a handful of inspectors nationwide, provide new scrutiny to older pipelines, and double safety violation fines to \$2 million. "We worked hard to strengthen the enforcement of current laws and to fill gaps in existing laws where necessary," Shuster said. But a new report from the research arm of Congress, the General Accounting Office, concludes that federal regulators need to step up their game when it comes to tracking the network of so-called feeder pipelines being built to ferry shale-gas from 3,000 wells in Pennsylvania and elsewhere. Under current law, backed by industry lobbyists, there are miles of pipeline exempt from inspection because they run through less-populated regions. The industry's position is that it makes no sense to field inspectors in areas that one lobbyist characterized as the "far hinterland," inasmuch as the risk of an explosion is lower than in urban areas, and pipeline companies have an economic incentive to maintain lines in good working order. That's going to be of less and less comfort, though, to state residents seeing an influx of shale-gas operations, with the prospect that up to 25,000 miles of pipeline could be built in their communities. It's troubling, for starters, that the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration doesn't exercise its authority to track the locations or safety records of the feeder lines. The GAO report seized on that, and recommended - albeit tentatively - that the U.S. Department of Transportation collect basic data on the pipelines as a means to address safety threats. That should be the minimum step taken, though the idea is getting pushback from industry warnings about undue burdens on pipeline firms.

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PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Seven communities file suit to oppose Marcellus Shale law HARRISBURG - Seven municipalities that banded together in recent weeks to oppose Pennsylvania's Marcellus Shale gas-drilling law filed a suit Thursday, challenging whether the state is authorized to supersede local regulation of drilling. The municipalities are Yardley and Nockamixon in Bucks County and five southwestern Pennsylvania towns. They were joined in the suit by a Monroeville doctor, environmental activists from the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, and a handful of municipal officials contesting the law in their personal capacities. The 117-page suit, filed in Commonwealth Court in Harrisburg, names as defendants Environmental Protection Secretary Michael Krancer, Attorney General Linda Kelly, and Robert Powelson, who chairs the Public Utility Commission. The bill Gov. Corbett signed into law on Feb. 14 tasks Powelson and other PUC officials with determining whether local ordinances governing natural-gas drilling fit into the allowable parameters laid out in the new law. Along with imposing a fee on gas extraction, the law sets statewide standards for such issues as where wells can be drilled. It allows drillers to challenge any local ordinances that are more stringent than the state standard. The suit argues that standardizing zoning rules for gas drilling is "an improper and arbitrary use of the commonwealth's police power." The municipal officials contended they "will be left to plan around rather than plan for orderly growth" in their communities. "By crafting a single set of statewide zoning rules applicable to oil and gas drilling throughout the commonwealth, the Pennsylvania General Assembly provided much sought-after predictability for the oil and gas development industry," the suit said.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

DEP warns communities to maintain Jacks Run The state Department of Environmental Protection has told four Westmoreland County municipalities to repair a flood-control project for Jacks Run or face potential loss of grant funding if a flood occurs. The state contends that the condition of the Greater Greensburg Area Flood Control Project -- which includes a stretch along Route 119 in South Greensburg, Southwest Greensburg, Greensburg and Hempfield -- is "unacceptable," according to DEP spokesman John Poister. "As a result of the 'unacceptable' rating, you are not eligible to participate in the flood-protection grant program or to receive federal funds (through the Army Corp. of Engineers) to repair the project should it be damaged during a high-water event," local officials were informed in an Oct. 21 letter sent to each municipality. That position hasn't changed in the five months since the letter was sent, Poister said. Many of the problems are centered in South Greensburg and Southwest Greensburg, each with fewer than 3,000 residents, according to the state. It cited no major problems in Hempfield. Neither community has money to make large-scale repairs, local officials said. They said they expected a proposed \$10.3 million state project, which would revamp the flood channel, to be done by now, but it was delayed by a lack of funds. "We're going to take a look at what has to be done, but I don't know if we're in the situation to do the kind of repairs they want," said Clentin Martin, the president of South Greensburg Borough Council. "It takes money," he added. "We don't have money to repair all the walls. That was supposed to be done two years ago" as part of the state project. The municipalities took over maintenance responsibility for the flood project after it was built in the 1950s and '60s, according to state environmental officials.

Commentary: A dubious green jobs count Green jobs or, as our president calls them, the "jobs of the future" have been notoriously tough to define and count. The Bureau of Labor Statistics recently did it, though, and now it is the results that are notorious. Though tasked with an admittedly difficult project, the BLS created a definition of green jobs that is so broad as to make it a meaningless measure of the green economy. Here's a sneak preview: There are 33 times as many green jobs in the septic tank and portable toilet servicing industry as in solar electricity utilities. The meaninglessness of the green-jobs count has not stopped cheerleaders for green mandates and subsidies from pointing to it as justification for more of the same. They point to the nearly 500,000 green jobs in the manufacturing sector. Maybe they have visions of 500,000 people assembling windmills and hybrid cars. If so, they need to put away the rose-colored glasses, get out the green eyeshades and look at the data in the BLS report. The largest green-job producers within manufacturing are steel mills. Over 50 percent of all jobs in steel mills are counted as green -- not because the steel goes to make green products, but because most of our steel is made from scrap steel. That's right; most of our steel is recycled steel. And according to Part 3 of the BLS definition, if you recycle, your job is green. The trend toward

greater use of scrap steel, however, has been going on for decades and is not the result of green subsidies. So what do the jobs of the future look like? Here are some industries and the number of green jobs reported by the BLS: School bus and employee transportation (private): 160,896; waste collection: 116,293; used merchandise stores: 106,865; engineering services: 100,847; architectural services: 71,891. It looks like the new green economy the president promised tilts more toward driving school buses, picking up trash and working at Goodwill -- not designing green buildings and high-tech equipment, as most people imagine.

Energy firm names liaison A Nebraska-based energy firm that plans to build a natural-gas-fueled electricity generating plant in South Huntingdon next year has hired a retired natural gas industry veteran and former chairman of the region's workforce development agency as its community relations representative.

Studies tie Bayer pesticide to bee die-off Two studies released on Thursday link use of pesticides to colony collapse disorder, a mysterious phenomenon that each recent winter has killed as many as half the bees kept by the nation's large commercial beekeepers. The company that invented the class of pesticides now in dispute -- Bayer Crop Science -- questions how one study was done and says that these and similar studies from earlier this year oversimplify the disorder and partially ignore decades of declining bee health. In a British study published yesterday in the journal Science, bumblebees reacted to low levels of a neonicotinoid pesticide, which acts on the central nervous system of insects, called imidacloprid that Bayer put on the market in 1994. Compared with bees not exposed to imidacloprid, exposed bumblebees were 8 to 12 percent smaller and produced about 85 percent fewer queen bees. "You could see the bees were more susceptible well above what we have seen in the field. Beekeepers are seeing a link between pesticides and CCD. But there are clearly many factors other than pesticides," said Dennis van Engelsdorp, a research scientist at the University of Maryland and leading honeybee expert. Bayer officials questioned how the study was conducted. "They have dosed these bees at levels of 60 parts per billion, when there are 1 to 5 parts per billion in most nectar. So of course the results are what we would expect. This is like taking 12 aspirins at one time instead of taking them throughout the day," said Jack Boyne, a spokesman for Bayer Crop Science and an entomologist. In a second study done in France, researchers tagged free-ranging honeybees with tiny radio-frequency identification microchips to track them. Bees with nonfatal doses of the pesticide still were about two to three times more likely to die while away from their nests, probably because the pesticide interfered with the bees' homing systems, the study said.

Water rates going up for North Fayette customers North Fayette County Municipal Authority this week adopted an operating budget for fiscal year 2012-2013 that calls for water rates to increase by 18 percent for customers.

HARRISBURGH PATRIOT NEWS

Commonwealth Pipeline would bring cheap Marcellus gas to midstate - but at what price? Not all pipelines are created equal. Some have powers of eminent domain, and some don't. The Commonwealth Pipeline — a proposed 50-foot swath cutting nearly 200 miles through Pennsylvania's midstate to deliver cheap Marcellus gas to Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, D.C. — would have the power, if approved, to cross people's property against their will. But that's the option of last resort, according to the company planning to build and run the new line. "Eminent domain is not a tool you want to use unless you have to," said Bill Moler, the chief operating officer of Inergy Midstream. "We're going to be here for an awful long time," said Moler. "We want happy landowners, happy neighbors." The precise route for the proposed pipeline has not been determined. A lot goes into planning the route. Recalcitrant landowners can be a factor. But those who wager they'll hold out for the highest price might be in for a surprise. "Everybody's going to get the same amount of money along the project," said Moler. "We're not a gathering company." Unlike the companies putting in "gathering lines" near gas wells, the Commonwealth Pipeline would be regulated as a utility by the federal government because it would transport the gas across state lines to consumers.

Solar-powered community proposed in South Middleton Township faces zoning hurdle SOUTH MIDDLETON TOWNSHIP --- Developers of a proposed solar-powered community said they'll press on after learning last night that township supervisors won't grant a zoning change for their 32-acre property at the intersection of Marsh, Rockledge and Eastgate drives. Property owner Brian McNew and project engineer John Snyder unveiled plans for a development of 290 apartment dwellings and about 30,000 square feet of commercial space, with heat, hot water and air conditioning for all buildings supplied by solar-thermal collectors built by McNew's company, EarthNet Energy of Chambersburg. Additional green technologies such as street lights and car-charging stations powered by solar-voltaic

cells could be incorporated into the neighborhood, to be called Summerbridge. The property is the only parcel in South Middleton Twp. zoned village-commercial, which calls for buildings closely fronting the street with first-floor retail spaces and residences on upper floors. The project is at the sketch plan stage, which means developers haven't asked for permits and supervisors have not taken any action.

Read more here: <http://www.centredaily.com/2012/02/08/3082316/company-wants-to-buy-public-rail.html#storylink=cpy>

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE

Editorial: Secrecy in the pipeline In what should be an explosive decision, the state Commonwealth Court has ruled that Public Utility Commission records relative to the safety of natural gas pipelines are not public records. A vast web of natural gas pipelines is being established throughout the Marcellus Shale gas field and beyond, to carry gas from wells to processing centers and from there to markets. Those thousands of miles of pipes are in addition to thousands more that carry gas into the commonwealth from traditional gas-producing areas, and distribute the gas to customers. That PUC records regarding pipeline safety legally may be kept secret is stunning. It's due to a loophole in the state Open Records Law, through which the courts have allowed state agencies to keep secrets from the public. This case began a year ago when The Wall Street Journal filed a right-to-know request with the PUC for records on pipeline safety incidents and technical information regarding the pipelines. The PUC rejected most of the request, and the newspaper appealed to the state Office of Open Records, which found that the records are indeed open to public access. But, on appeal, the Commonwealth Court bought the PUC's argument that pipeline safety records fit inside the gaping loophole. The Open Records Law provides exemptions for records relating to a bureaucratic creature called a noncriminal investigation - a vaguely defined term that could cover just about anything that the government does. Since the passage of the law in 2008, state agencies repeatedly have used the loophole to deny access to what should be public information. Lawmakers should revisit the law to specifically and very narrowly define what is meant by a noncriminal investigation, so that the routine work of state agencies relative to public safety, expenditures of public money and other important matters will be fully open to public scrutiny.

WNEP-TV SCRANTON/WILKES-BARRE

Fire at Gas Compressor Station A fire occurred at Williams' Lathrop Compressor Station off Route 29 in Springville Township in Susquehanna County just before noon on Thursday. The compressor station is where gas from Marcellus Shale wells in the county is pressurized for transport through pipelines. Heavy smoke could be seen coming from the building. Everyone was evacuated from the station, and the station is now shut down. A spokesperson for the company said once it is safe to return to the station, there will be a thorough investigation into the cause of the incident. The spokesperson also said that no one was hurt in the fire.

WILKES-BARRE CITIZENS' VOICE

Women at Work in the Marcellus Shale Industry PITTSTON TWP. – Becky Snyder stands at just 4-foot-11, yet her stature isn't a barrier as she moves earth with heavy machinery powerful enough to knock down a house. Snyder, a construction foreman, and Jennifer Coutts operate the largest machines in Pittston Township-based Linde Construction's fleet, routinely running bulldozers, loaders and excavators as the company lays miles of pipeline in the Marcellus Shale drilling areas. They currently work in Dimock, where Coutts operates heavy machinery with manicured nails. The pipeline construction industry in the Marcellus Shale region has led to a growth in jobs and as Snyder and Coutts exemplify, the jobs aren't just for the guys. According to the state Department of Labor and Industry, the percentage of women in the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton/Hazleton area working in all construction industries in 2011 has increased slightly to 12.8 percent from 11.8 percent five years ago. A total of 1,078 women worked in construction in 2011 in the area and 28,080 statewide. Locally, 315 women worked in Marcellus Shale-related construction industries in 2011 and 7,508 statewide. Snyder, 44, of Carbondale, has spent the last 21 years working for Linde, a utility pipeline and heavy construction contractor. She started as a flagger and advanced to laborer and machine operator. As a woman working in a non-traditional career, she said she works to break down barriers every day. "You have to prove yourself every day. You have to become tough and you have to become one of them," she said. "It's a challenge out here every day and you learn stuff every day. If you're willing to learn, it's a good place to be. It's a good opportunity for women to be in the construction world and to learn the same as a man could," Snyder said. Snyder, a married mother of two, said her family has been patient and supportive over the years as she works

long hours and sometimes encounters problems late like hitting water mains. Growing up as a tomboy, she said she always expected she would work in the construction industry. Her family doesn't expect her to cook, she said.

WILLIAMSPORT SUN-GAZETTE

Expanded liquid waste treatment options OK'd BLOSSBURG - Hydro Recovery LP now can treat additional wastewater from the oil and gas industry, thanks to a recent approval by the state Department of Environmental Protection. The approval will allow additional types of liquid waste such as boring fluids and hydrostatic fluids to be recycled into treated brine water that the industry can reuse for hydraulic fracturing in the Marcellus Shale, thus reducing the need for fresh water supplies and for waste disposal through injection wells or land filling, said Teresa Copenhaver, business development manager. Boring fluids - the muddy water created during the laying of collection pipeline - and hydrostatic fluids - the result of pipeline testing - contain some solids but no chemicals, she said. "We had asked if we could amend our general permit to take additional fluids and from there, they agreed to expand it even more," Copenhaver said. The timing for the expansion coincides with Hydro Recovery's plans to put in additional storage tanks and a crystalizer at its Blossburg plant, she added.

STATE COLLEGE CENTRE DAILY TIMES

Municipalities get gas fee estimates PLEASANT GAP — It's not Mega Millions money, but cash-strapped local governments are still yearning to get their hands on the impact fees due from Marcellus Shale natural gas extraction in the county. At Thursday's meeting of the Centre County Association of Township Officials, local leaders received initial estimates on the revenue they can expect from Act 13, which installed an impact fee on drillers but placed limits on how townships can spend their newfound cash. At the top end of the scale, Burnside Township, with 30 Marcellus gas wells, will make out with around \$255,000, and Snow Shoe Township, with 17 wells, will pull in \$157,000. Most townships and municipalities in the counties will receive between \$1,000 and \$30,000 each. At the bottom, Howard, Port Matilda and Unionville, which don't have any Marcellus development, will see less than \$1,000 apiece. The county government is in line for a \$500,000 payday. Sue Hannegan, the county's assistant planning director, handed out the preliminary figures, along with an outline of the new limits set on zoning and floodplain management. To get the money, townships are required to submit their 2010 budgets to the Pennsylvania Utilities Commission by July 6 and must eliminate, by Aug. 13, all ordinances that are more stringent than the limits on oil and gas operations set in Act 13.

READING EAGLE

County OKs impact fee on future gas wellsThe Berks County commissioners adopted an ordinance Thursday that allows the county to collect an impact fee on any natural gas wells eventually dug here. Though the gas-rich Marcellus shale does not extend into Berks, the Utica shale reaches into the northern end of the county and could be a site for future drilling, the commissioners said. Commissioners Christian Y. Leinbach and Kevin S. Barnhardt voted in favor of the ordinance, which would apply to the drilling of any unconventional gas wells. The county would receive revenue based on a complicated formula that also awards revenue to the state and to municipalities. Leinbach, who is commissioners chairman, has said that even if drilling occurs in Berks, it could be 10 to 20 years away. But Leinbach and Barnhardt said that if it does occur, they want the county to be reimbursed for any infrastructure damage drilling might cause. They also want those firms to pay for proper state supervision of drilling activities and for environmental protection from potential damage related to drilling. Commissioner Mark C. Scott, who voted against the ordinance, believes state law requires that drilling must already be taking place for a county to levy an impact fee. Also, the fee might discourage drillers from developing the Utica shale because the gas is deeper than in the Marcellus shale and more expensive to extract, he said. "It (the ordinance) is much ado about nothing until gas is extracted in Berks County, which technically could be never," he said.

POTTSTOWN MERCURY

Nutrient credits auction HARRISBURG — The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST) and the Department of Environmental Protection, along with financial information services company Markit, has held the first "forward" auction in 2012 for the sale and purchase of nutrient credits in Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay

watershed. A “forward” auction means that the certified credits sold on March 21 will be delivered later and applied to the 2012-15 compliance years. The auction affords wastewater treatment plants and other regulated entities the opportunity to purchase credits to meet their nitrogen and phosphorus discharge limits for these compliance years. “This auction once again demonstrates the viability of the financial mechanism that we have developed to aid in improving the waters of the Chesapeake Bay,” PENNVEST executive director Paul Marchetti said. “It significantly furthers our efforts to foster trades in the Bay watershed and we look forward to more auctions throughout the year.” PENNVEST hosts the auctions to encourage the trading of nutrient credits in the Susquehanna and Potomac watersheds. DEP’s nutrient credit trading program offers a cost-effective way for facilities that are subject to nitrogen and phosphorus limits to meet those limits by working with other facilities, non-point sources or both. For its auctions, PENNVEST is supported by Markit, which provides the platform for enrollment and eligibility, auctions and registry services. Markit has provided operations and infrastructure services to environmental programs worldwide. Credits representing the annual removal of 55,224 pounds of nitrogen from the Susquehanna River watershed and the Chesapeake Bay during 2012 were sold for \$4 per credit. Credits representing the annual removal of 30,000 pounds of nitrogen from the Susquehanna River watershed and the Chesapeake Bay over each of the following three years, 2013 to 2015, were sold for \$2.98 per credit.

STATE IMPACT PENNSYLVANIA

Lackawanna College Gets 35000 Pound Gift from Gas Company Lack-awanna Col-lege cre-ated one of the first degree pro-grams for train-ing stu-dents to work in Pennsylvania’s grow-ing Mar-cel-lus Shale nat-ural gas indus-try. And it may be the first to acquire such a large piece of equip-ment as a train-ing tool. Exter-ran, a multi-national Texas-based energy com-pany, has given the col-lege a piston-pump com-pres-sor and six-cylinder engine “pack-age” used by the com-pany to help process gas. A com-pres-sor applies pres-sure, reduc-ing the vol-ume of gas, and forc-ing it to travel through pipelines. To learn more about how this works, check out Exterran’s online “expert” tool. Exterran’s com-pres-sor had been used to ser-vice nat-ural gas extracted by Tal-is-man Energy. Now it will be used by stu-dents train-ing for work in the gas indus-try. Lackawanna’s New Mil-ford cam-pus has a one-year cer-tifi-cate pro-gram in gas com-pres-sion tech-nol-ogy. Stu-dent Louis Ric-cio is quoted in a college-issued press release as eager to use the tool and learn his new trade.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Pa.)

Pa.: Explosion at natural gas compressor station ALLENTOWN, Pa. - An explosion at a natural gas compressor station in northeastern Pennsylvania sent black smoke into the air Thursday, alarming residents but causing no injuries. The state Department of Environmental Protection said there was a small natural gas leak from the Lathrop compressor station in Springville Township, Susquehanna County, about 30 miles northwest of Scranton, but that air-quality testing showed no problems in the surrounding area. DEP was alerted to the explosion around 11:30 a.m. "I heard a big boom," said Burton Miller, 53, who lives in a mobile home up the street. "It shook the trailer so bad." Vera Scroggins, an anti-drilling activist who lives in the area, said she saw thick clouds of black smoke billowing from the site. Helen Humphreys, a spokeswoman for compressor station owner Williams Partners LP, said there was a fire. The compressor station pressurizes natural gas taken from the Marcellus Shale formation for movement along the pipeline system. "Once it's safe to return to the station, we'll begin a thorough investigation into the cause and determine precisely what happened. Right now our top priority is to ensure that everybody is safe, making sure they stay safe, and working with the first responders," Humphreys said. DEP spokeswoman Colleen Connolly said there were no reports of injuries. She said a fire department from South Abington Township, Lackawanna County, was called in to spray a foaming agent onto the site. Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. sold the Lathrop station, another compressor station and 75 miles of gathering pipelines to Williams for \$150 million in 2010. Williams has since built a 32-mile pipeline connecting Lathrop to its Transco interstate pipeline

Towns sue Pa. over Marcellus Shale law HARRISBURG, Pa. - A group including seven municipalities Thursday sued the state of Pennsylvania over its new law regulating the rapid growth of natural gas exploration, saying among other things that it unconstitutionally takes away the power to control property from towns and landowners for the benefit of the oil and gas industry. The approximately 120-page lawsuit was filed in state Commonwealth Court. Plaintiffs include townships in southwestern Pennsylvania, Robinson, Peters, Cecil and Mount Pleasant in Washington County, and South Fayette in Allegheny County, where exploration of the Marcellus Shale is under way, and Nockamixon Township and Yardley Borough in southeastern Pennsylvania's Bucks County where officials are worried about their

inability to control future exploration of different natural gas formations. Among the objectionable provisions cited by the lawsuit are requirements that drilling, waste pits and pipelines be allowed in every zoning district, including residential districts, as long as certain buffers are observed.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

If you're happy and you know it ... let the government know Of all the phrases bestowed to us by the Founding Fathers, few come up more than “pursuit of happiness.” Yet who knows where the nation really stands on that score? Now an answer may be forthcoming. Amid a wave of research on the subject, the federal government is seeking ways to measure what some have called gross national happiness. Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, a panel of experts in psychology and economics, including Nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman, began convening in December to try to define reliable measures of “subjective well-being.” If successful, these could become official statistics. The idea of the government tallying personal feelings might seem frivolous — or impossibly difficult. For decades, after all, the world has gotten by with gauging a nation’s quality of life on the basis of its GDP, or gross domestic product, the sum of its economic output. _

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

Commentary: Fed court ruling on MTR mining dangerous CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- I am not a legal expert. I don't know how or why U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson came to determine in her recent ruling that the Obama administration overstepped its authority in revoking a permit last year for the largest proposed strip-mining operation in central Appalachia. Perhaps within the legal confines she had before her this was her only conclusion. But, as a witness to the consequences of mountaintop removal, I can only view this ruling as a cold shoulder, a failure to acknowledge those who live (and die) in mountaintop removal communities. In spite of present and growing scientific evidence that mountaintop removal is causing great harm to human health, this ruling has potentially opened the door for the coal industry to unleash as many as 100 new mountaintop removal permits. Up to now the EPA has cited the Clean Water Act in their rulings pertaining to MTR. It is the EPA's job to protect our water, and they should continue their efforts to do so, but that is not the only available legal weapon at their disposal. It is not only our water that is being poisoned. We know that the air we breathe in MTR communities contains silica dust, diesel fuel, ammonium nitrate and other toxins. Just recently we have discovered that our garden soils are deadly as well with elevated levels of toxins. When considering the fact that more than 5 million pounds of ammonium nitrate diesel fuel mix have been detonated daily, six days a week, for the past 15 years of full blown MTR, it is no wonder people are sick and dying, and birth defects in mountaintop removal communities are off the charts; the fallout is killing us. Our water, our air and our soil are contaminated. We are witnessing a health crisis possibly unlike any in U.S. memory calling for all hands on deck to end this unnecessary and harmful type of mining. Political leaders everywhere, like it or not, are on the spot; and in the end history will hold them accountable. The science cannot be denied any longer; it is confirmed by accelerated rates of cancer, respiratory illnesses, heart disease, stunning numbers of birth defects, and death in mountaintop removal communities. In the interest of public health an immediate moratorium on all new MTR permits needs to be declared now. In the best interest of public health, both executive and congressional branches of our government have emergency powers to intervene and declare a moratorium on MTR permitting. What are they waiting for?

BLUEFIELD DAILY TELEGRAPH

EPA rulings bring sharp criticism from region's lawmakers (Wednesday) BLUEFIELD — The region’s congressional delegation in Washington responded Tuesday with sharp criticism of new Environmental Protection Agency rules that could effectively prevent new coal-fired power plants from being constructed. “It makes no sense at all, it really makes

no sense,” U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., said of the EPA carbon pollution standards for new power plants. “You have people shooting at you at every end, and every time you turn around they are discounting coal.” Manchin said the new EPA rules are further proof of the administration’s war on coal. Manchin said the new rules could stop the construction of new coal-fired power plants. “That’s their intention, but I’m not accepting that,” Manchin said. “Because it is not realistic. All they are going to do is drive the price of (energy) through the sky. It’s going to be a hardship on working families.” Manchin said coal is still responsible for 45 percent of the nation’s energy needs. By 2035, Manchin said coal is still expected to meet 39 percent of the nation’s energy needs. “So you are depending upon an energy source for two decades or more,” Manchin said. “As (Tuesday’s) announcement shows, this EPA is fully engaging in a war on coal, even though this country will continue to rely on coal as an affordable, stable and abundant energy source for decades to come.” U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Va., said Tuesday’s ruling was another example of the Obama’ administration’s efforts to kill coal. “Based upon the technologies we have today, this is the end of coal-fired plants,” Griffith said. “This is just the opening up of a new front on the Obama administration’s war on coal. We have to use our power at the ballot box to defeat Obama himself and his liberal allies.” Griffith said Democrats representing coal-producing states are fighting against the EPA. However, Griffith said a “clear majority of Democrats think coal is a four-lettered word that can’t be used.” “It’s another blow,” Griffith said. “They are trying to do everything they can to cut the legs out from under the American coal industry while our foreign competitors are increasing their use of coal and exports of coal.”

WEST VIRGINIA STATE PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Kanawha County to reopen recycling facility for drop-offs Kanawha County is a step closer to getting its own recycling center back on line. Charleston-area residents won’t need to drive to Nitro or Raleigh County to drop off their recyclables.

Alpha CEO talks future of coal, regulations, safety Alpha Natural Resources CEO came to University of Charleston to speak on the future of coal on the day when the Environmental Protection Agency put forth a new rule that would effectively stop coal-fired power plants from being constructed.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

Arsenic ban bill squeaks out of Senate panel The bill that would ban the use of products containing arsenic from chicken feed barely made it out of a Senate committee today after the panel adopted amendments strengthening a House version that proponents considered far too weak to matter. The legislation emerged from the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee on a 6-5 vote with its chairwoman, Sen. Joan Carter Conway, voting no -- a tepid endorsement as the bill goes to the Senate floor. Conway, a Baltimore Democrat, argues that since the product the legislation would ban has already been withdrawn from the market, it was pointless to pass a bill. Proponents want to ensure that the main product in question, called roxarsone, doesn't return to the market. Sen. Paul Pinsky, the bill's leading proponent in the Senate, said he hoped the House would accept the Senate amendments. That assumes the bill would pass on the Senate floor, an iffy proposition given the narrow committee vote.

CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Offshore wind nears final House vote ANNAPOLIS -- Maryland got one step closer to advancing offshore wind in the state when the House of Delegates on Thursday preliminarily approved a modified version of Gov. Martin O'Malley's proposal to build turbines off the coast of Ocean City. The bill presented on the House floor features several amendments from the House Economic Matters Committee, including one to cap increases to residents' monthly utility bills at \$1.50 a month, down from the \$2 a month in the earlier bill. Since last year, one of the most contested points of the wind bill has been increases to residents' monthly utility bills.

WJZ-TV (CBS) BALTIMORE

Md. Bans Swimming, Fishing, Kayaking In Patapsco River Due To Sewage Spill Tens of millions of gallons. That’s

how much raw sewage has flowed into the Patapsco River this week. Alex DeMetrick reports on how the spill happened and the effects downstream. Raw sewage flooded the inside of a Baltimore County pumping station Sunday night. “The weld on the pipe failed and allowed approximately an 8 inch to 12 inch hole to come into the pumping station,” said Edward C. Adams, Jr., director of the Baltimore County Department of Public Works (DPW). “We had to kick off the pumps, we had to let the overflow occur to basically save the integrity of the station.” When that happened, sewage flowed unchecked into the Patapsco River for the next four days. “We’re estimating, right now, 55 million gallons,” Adams said. It was finally stopped when a temporary network of new pipes called a “pump around” bypassed the station, reconnecting a massive 84 inch line which carries the sewage to the Patapsco treatment plant. This isn’t the first time this pumping station has had big problems. Last year, after Hurricane Irene blew through the state, parts of that same pipeline blew out. It happened when power to the station was lost. Now, as then, warning signs went up and parts of the Chesapeake Bay are again off-limits to shellfish harvesting. But with oyster season ending Friday, the ban is not expected to create much financial loss. But residue from the spill is still flowing downstream, despite work crews. “Putting the quickest possible fix to stop the overflow,” Adams said. ... While saving the station’s very expensive pumps. Until the Department of the Environment declares the Patapsco safe, activities like swimming, fishing and kayaking are not allowed.

ANNAPOLIS CAPITAL

Chesapeake Bay lost underwater grasses in 2011 One-fifth of the Chesapeake Bay’s underwater grasses died in 2011, falling victim to a strange weather year that included heavy spring rains and a pair of late-summer tropical storms. Aerial surveys found 63,074 acres of bay grasses in 2011, down from 79,664 acres the year before. The goal is to have 185,000 acres of grass beds in the bay. But while some of the bay’s biggest and lushest grass beds shrunk, some sparse grass beds grew larger. Certain species may have been helped by the influx of fresh water in the spring, which spurred seeds to grow. “We think we know the answer, then nature comes along and puts a little twist in it,” said Robert Orth, a grass expert at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. Underwater grasses are a vital part of the Chesapeake’s ecosystem, creating homes and hiding places for crabs and fish, providing food for ducks and helping to slow waves and settle floating dirt particles. Anne Arundel County’s rivers continued to have woefully small amounts of underwater grass. Not a single acre of grass was counted in the South, West and Rhode rivers. The Magothy had just 7.86 acres of grasses, while the Patapsco had 3.63 acres. The only river with abundant grass is the Severn, which had 192.18 acres, up from 174.78 acres the year before.

EPA defends Chesapeake Bay 'pollution diet' (Thursday) The federal government is sticking up for its Chesapeake Bay “pollution diet,” as it battles farmers who want to nix the program. In a court filing Tuesday, lawyers for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency argued that the farmers lack legal standing to challenge the diet and have their facts wrong. The EPA argued that the pollution diet is a “flexible, adaptive process” that has been done hand-in-hand with bay-area states. The EPA is asking a federal judge in Pennsylvania to rule in its favor in a lawsuit filed by the American Farm Bureau Federation and other farming groups in January 2011. The farmers made a similar request earlier this year. At issue is the Chesapeake Bay pollution diet — a first-of-its-kind attempt to reduce pollution enough to get the bay off of the federal list of the nation’s “dirty waters.” Part of the Clean Water Act, the pollution diet — officially called a “total maximum daily load,” or TMDL — sets out strict pollution limits that must be met by the states that drain into the bay. Normally, pollution diets are for a single river or stream, not for a vast watershed such as the Chesapeake Bay. If the states don’t meet the pollution standards, the feds could step in with sanctions, such as yanking federal funding or taking over issuing pollution permits.

MARYLAND GAZETTE NEWSPAPERS

Bay cleanup bills focus of Annapolis rally About 100 people, many dressed in watermen hip-waders, boating life jackets and hats resembling crab claws and shark teeth, rallied in Annapolis this week in support of bills that they say will help preserve clean water and save the Chesapeake Bay for seafood production and recreational fishing. “The Chesapeake Bay is on life support,” Del. Tom Hucker (D-Dist. 20) of Silver Spring told the crowd. With less than two weeks left in the session, environmentalists are pushing to get several bills through aimed at cleaning the state’s waterways and to improve the Chesapeake Bay. The Senate passed a weakened version of a bill sought by Gov. Martin O’Malley (D) to reduce suburban sprawl. Meanwhile, the House of Delegates passed bills on stormwater management and the flush tax to fund additional treatment plant upgrades, but both await Senate action. Del. Maggie L. McIntosh

(D-Dist. 43) of Baltimore urged the clean-water advocates at Wednesday's rally to pressure their state legislators to assure passage in both houses. "This is the moment in time for the Bay," said Will Baker, president of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. "If we miss this opportunity to finish the job of saving the Bay, we may never have another." Baker said the measures not only would help the environment but would create jobs to upgrade the treatment plants and for watermen harvesting seafood from the Bay. "Our children and grandchildren should be able to swim in Maryland waters without worry for their health," Baker said. Environmentalists say they have worked with religious leaders to broaden the coalition of those who want to be good stewards of the environment. The Rev. Robert Turner of St. John's Baptist Church in Columbia agreed. "As a pastor, the stewardship of our environment is very important to me as it is to members of faith communities throughout Maryland," he said.

HAGERSTOWN HERALD MAIL

Hagerstown awarded \$87000 in grants for bike lanes, trees Hagerstown has won a pair of grants worth nearly \$90,000 that will be used to add bicycle lanes and trees to help meet the city's Community Greening Grant Program goal. The city was selected as one of the winners of Maryland's first bikeways grants, worth \$60,000, as well as an additional \$27,000 from the Chesapeake Bay Trust for the costs associated with planting new trees, according to a city news release. The Hagerstown City Council on Tuesday unanimously approved a grant agreement with the bay trust. The program strives to improve the quality of life in urban areas by increasing the forest canopy and bettering air quality. The bikeways grant was developed as part of the Cycle Maryland Initiative under Gov. Martin O'Malley, which includes programs that support the development of bicycle path connections to work, school and shopping. "These grants are a great way to help local jurisdictions make key connections to build a more comprehensive bike network that will benefit our citizens," O'Malley said in the release. "By getting out and taking a bike ride, we can learn to enjoy more of Maryland's natural treasures, help reduce the impact on the land, improve our fitness and well-being, and enhance our quality of life." Mike Mittel, owner of Hub City Cycles and chairman of the city Bicycling Advisory Committee, said the grant will help expand the bike lanes already in place around Hagerstown. "It's really going to make Hagerstown a little more friendly for cycling, which is the overall key," Mittel said. "Every time we can get some money our way, that's a real help."

VIRGINIA

FREDERICKSBURG FREELANCE STAR

Editorial: Dirty water THOSE WHO advocate clean waterways need not be concerned that their work will soon be done. Such is the thrust of the state Department of Environmental Quality's 2012 version of the "impaired waters" list for Virginia. That's not to say ongoing efforts aren't producing some improvement. According to DEQ, some 260 miles of rivers and streams and 2,700 acres of lakes have been removed from the soiled-waters list, meaning they now fully meet water-quality standards. Conversely, about 13,140 miles of rivers and streams, 94,000 acres of lakes and reservoirs, and 2,130 square miles of estuaries remain unclean. That includes the 840 miles of streams added this year, which offset the gains and then some. Many more miles and acres require more research for a fair assessment. Locally, residents should be aware that many tributaries to the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers are on the list, meaning that their ability to support aquatic life is compromised and that they could pose risks for shell-fishing and swimming. E. coli bacteria, which indicates the presence of human and animal waste, makes portions of Aquia Creek and other local streams unsuitable for recreation. Mercury has been found in the tissue of fish in Motts Run Reservoir; mercury and PCBs (carcinogenic polychlorinated biphenyls) in Lake Anna's finned denizens.

FAIRFAX NEWS

Virginia on Track to Install America's First Offshore Wind Energy Turbine The Virginia Marine Resources Commission has voted unanimously to approve proposed construction of a 479-foot-tall, five-megawatt wind turbine generator prototype in the lower Chesapeake Bay, three miles off the Eastern Shore town of Cape Charles, Governor Bob McDonnell announced. The construction of the prototype turbine is scheduled to be completed in late 2013, which would be before other offshore wind energy projects are slated to be built in other parts of the country. The expected

design life of the prototype turbine is expected to be 20 years or more. The submarine cable system is expected to last more than 100 years. This prototype is a significant step forward in McDonnell's goal to pursue an "all of the above" energy approach including wind, coal, nuclear, oil, and renewable energy projects making Virginia the energy capital of the East Coast. The project now requires approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and review by the U.S. Coast Guard. The proposal was submitted by Gamesa Energy USA, which is partnering with Huntington Ingalls Newport News Shipbuilding, to develop and test new offshore wind technologies that will reduce the cost of wind power.

MISCELLANEOUS

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Jackson Says Greenhouse Gas Proposal Seeks to Cut Pollution, Boost Jobs The Obama administration's recent proposal to set limits on greenhouse gas emissions from new fossil fuel-fired power plants and its support for production of natural gas and unconventional gas are part of a strategy to both reduce pollution and boost jobs by setting clear rules for the private sector, EPA Administrator Jackson tells BNA on the sidelines of an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development meeting in Paris. "The measure is intended to ... give the economy a strong signal that the reduction of greenhouse gas pollution is an important guidepost in designing the power generation of the future," says Jackson.

Inhofe Bill Would Give States Authority Over Hydraulic Fracturing Process Sen. Inhofe introduces a bill to mandate that states, not the federal government, have the sole authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing processes within their borders. The Fracturing Regulations Are Effective in State Hands Act specifies that injecting fluids or propping agents as part of the hydraulic fracturing process will be regulated only by the states. The bill does not attempt to limit federal authority governing other matters related to oil and gas extraction.

Court Allows Lawsuit to Force EPA Action on Air Toxics Rule to Proceed A lawsuit alleging EPA violated a statutory obligation to issue regulations on brick and structural clay products by Nov. 15, 2000, will be allowed to continue after an EPA motion to dismiss is denied by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The Sierra Club's complaint alleges a violation of a nondiscretionary duty to update the air toxics standards for that industrial sector. James Pew, an attorney with the environmental law firm Earthjustice, says the next step will be either to negotiate or litigate a new deadline for the brick and structural clay products regulation.

Advisers Urge EPA to Improve Model for Lead Cleanup at Waste Sites EPA should improve a model it uses to set lead cleanup levels at superfund sites and other contaminated sites, the Children's Health Protection Advisory Committee says in a draft letter. The agency also should end the practice of partial lead pipe replacements when it revises its lead and copper drinking water regulation, according to the advisory panel. The letter offers advice on a model EPA uses for rulemakings, data it should use or needs to obtain to make decisions on lead, and strategies it should pursue to work with other U.S. and foreign governments to reduce lead exposures.

EPA Faulted on Use of Contractors for Risk Management Inspections EPA is using contractors to conduct risk management inspections in Kansas, Kentucky, and Tennessee, despite federal court rulings holding that contractors cannot conduct inspections, the agency's inspector general says. The agency "should immediately review the legality and appropriateness" of using contractors for the inspections and, if needed, "take immediate action to eliminate or revise" the practice, EPA Inspector General Arthur A. Elkins Jr. writes in a memo to Cynthia Giles, EPA assistant administrator for enforcement and compliance assurance

BLOOMBERG NEWS SERVIC

High Methane in Pennsylvania Water Deemed Safe by EPA Tests by the Environmental Protection Agency of water in Dimock, Pennsylvania, found elevated levels of methane consistent with leakage from gas drilling nearby, according to scientists who reviewed the data. Results from the first 11 wells tested by the EPA found one with a methane level of

52 parts per million, which could be explosive, and at least three others above the state standard of 7 milligrams per liter, according to Ronald Bishop, a chemist at the State University of New York's College at Oneonta. The findings raise questions about the EPA's March 15 statement to Dimock residents that their water didn't pose a health risk, Bishop said. "They sprang too early with these results, and in telling people their water is safe," Bishop said in an interview. "I'm used to seeing better from them."...The EPA notified state and local officials after finding the one well with levels of methane exceeding 28 parts per million, which is the maximum amount of methane than can be dissolved in water before it will leave as a gas, said Terri White, a spokeswoman for the EPA in Philadelphia. "Methane is not explosive while in solution," White said in an e-mail. "Methane in water does not impair the odor, taste or color, nor does it affect in anyway the potability of the water." Bishop hypothesizes that the gas gurgling into wells may be kicking up mud that is leading to the unpleasant odor and taste residents such as Sautner complain about. Robert Poreda, a professor of earth and environmental sciences at the University of Rochester, and his colleagues have tested their own 50 samples in the area since November and have found similar results to the EPA's, he said. Methane levels may be even higher than the agency's estimates, because the gas can escape if samples aren't drawn carefully, he said in an interview. "If this were natural, why hasn't their house blown up?" he said.

MSNBC

Pennsylvania water tainted by hydraulic fracturing **EDITOR'S NOTE:** An earlier version of this story mischaracterized the extent of the water problems.)**European Pressphoto Agency (EPA) reports:**The gas rush in Pennsylvania, created by the controversial drilling process known as hydraulic fracturing, or fracking—which requires injecting huge amounts of water, sand, and chemicals at high pressure thousands of feet beneath the Earth's surface to extract reserves of natural gas, has brought an economic boom to the state, generating 23,000 jobs, and billions of dollars in state and local tax revenues. It has caused complaints in Northeastern Pennsylvania that the drilling is polluting the water table with dangerous quantities of methane. Some residents now rely on outside water distribution, and are making their protests heard. Yet with the gas industry expected to keep drilling here—as many as 2,500 new wells are expected in Pennsylvania every year—residents opposed to fracking are bracing for a drawn-out fight.

PLANETSAVE.COM

Fracking Update: Two Investigations Give 'OK' to Controversial ... A major review of hydraulic fracturing studies, completed last month by UT researchers, found "no direct evidence" that the natural gas drilling process known as 'fracking' contaminates groundwater. A second investigation by the EPA of sites in Dimock, Penn., initial results of which were released last week, found only low levels of chemicals and that the water was "safe to drink." The 380,000.00 review* was conducted by a University of Texas (Austin) team lead by Charles Groat, former director of the U.S. Geological Survey, and results were released last month at the Annual Science/AAAS meeting in Vancouver, B.C. The review suggested that the effects commonly attributed to fracking — contamination from methane and other chemicals — were occurring close to the surface and were the (probable) result of "poorly lined wells and storage ponds". The team found no evidence of fracking fluids leaking deep underground.

NEW YORK TIMES

Blog: A New Weapon in the Fracking Wars In recent months, efforts to restrict future natural gas drilling in New York State have ranged from proposed buffer zones around gas wells for the protection of watersheds and aqueducts to outright drilling bans enacted by towns and villages. Enter the historic preservationists. The Preservation League of New York State plans to announce this week that it will list swaths of land in drilling regions upstate as endangered historic and cultural resources and seek drilling restrictions around the properties. League officials argue that proposed state rules that would govern hydrofracking once this type of drilling is green-lighted by the Cuomo administration do not take many historic resources in the Marcellus or Utica Shale regions into account. As a result, they say, some valuable properties would be vulnerable to damage from industrial activity. The officials say they are trying to protect buildings and agricultural landscapes dating back to the 1700s and 1800s in 30 counties. These include Greek Revival-style houses, barns and field patterns. "You're in effect seeing landscapes that existed 150 years ago," said Daniel Mackay, the league's director of public policy. "That type of setting is at risk of having its character transformed by the drilling, support traffic, pipelines and water withdrawals." In their comments to the state Department of Environmental Conservation, which is currently reviewing the proposed fracking regulations and an environmental impact study,

preservationists are urging state officials to require a survey of historic and cultural resources as a condition of granting a drilling permit application. Once such resources are identified, buffer zones should be created to protect those sites, they say.

Blog: Making Sense of the Wacky Weather Like many people, I've been struggling to understand what is going on with the weather. As I flipped on my air conditioner one day in the middle of March to cool down an unbearably hot apartment, I thought, this is just *weird*. In recent years, we have lived through one weather extreme after another, sometimes whipsawing between them rather quickly. So, for my recent article on this topic, reported with Joanna Foster, I tried an interesting little exercise. Climate scientists, like the rest of us, have friends and relatives who wonder what is happening. So I asked the scientists: When you see your extended family over Thanksgiving or Christmas and they ask about the weather, what do you tell them?

Blog: On Our Radar: Organized Environmental Crime At a conference in France, a high-ranking Interpol official calls for a crackdown on "serious, organized and often transnational" environmental crimes like elephant poaching for ivory, the killing of rhinos for their horns and illegal logging. "Ounce for ounce, rhinoceros horn is now more valuable than gold," an expert on trade in endangered species tells delegates. [The Guardian] The former superintendent of the Massey Energy mine in southern West Virginia where an explosion killed 29 workers pleads guilty to a federal fraud charge. Prosecutors said that the superintendent, Gary May, manipulated the mine ventilation system during inspections to fool safety officials and disabled a methane monitor on a cutting machine a few months before the explosion in April 2010. [Associated Press]

Blog: A Very Long Road for Military Nuclear Waste Slowly, slowly, the Energy Department is moving forward with solidifying the liquid nuclear wastes left over from cold-war weapons production. On Thursday, the department said it had closed two more of the 51 underground tanks at the Savannah River Site in western South Carolina. The high-level waste was mixed with molten glass to keep it chemically locked up for millennia, and the lower-level material was mixed with a kind of cement that is supposed to keep it in place until the radioactivity dies down. The department has 22 tanks at Savannah River that do not meet Environmental Protection Agency standards, mostly because they are single-wall tanks rather than double-wall. It closed two of them in 1997 but has faced numerous technical problems. Now it says it will have four more done by 2014 or 2015, and all of them by 2028. It is starting with the tanks that are closest to the water table because their contents would spread most rapidly if they leaked. (The area has a high water table.)

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Obama administration, 5 states reach deal to quicken approval of wind farms in Great Lakes TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. — The Obama administration and five states have reached an agreement to speed up approval of offshore wind farms in the Great Lakes, which have been delayed by cost concerns and public opposition. Under the deal, which administration officials disclosed to The Associated Press ahead of an announcement scheduled for Friday, state and federal agencies will craft a blueprint for speeding regulatory review of proposed wind farms without sacrificing environmental and safety standards. The Great Lakes have no offshore wind turbines, although a Cleveland partnership announced plans last year for a demonstration project that would place five to seven turbines in Lake Erie about 7 miles north of the city, generating 20-30 megawatts of electricity.

ATLANTIC CITY PRESS

New Jersey losing ground in race for first offshore wind farm New Jersey is losing ground in the race to build the nation's first offshore wind farm. The Virginia Marine Resources Commission approved construction this week on a single 479-foot-tall turbine that would generate 5 megawatts of power in the Chesapeake Bay. Slated for construction in 2013, it could be the first offshore wind turbine in the United States. Fishermen's Energy of Cape May is nearly ready to submit additional economic data to shore up its stance that offshore wind will benefit New Jersey taxpayers and electricity customers after two studies this year questioned the costs versus the benefits of offshore wind. The company plans to build six turbines in state waters about three miles off Atlantic City. Reached in South Carolina on Thursday, Fishermen's Energy spokeswoman Rhonda Jackson said companies in the nascent industry are not exactly in a race to be first since each state has different regulations. Likewise, projects in federal waters require leases through the U.S. Department of the Interior. Fishermen's Energy still needs approvals from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

and the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities. "I don't like to say we're going to be first," she said. Meanwhile, construction on Virginia's pilot project is slated to begin in 2013 with a 3-mile-long cable buried in the sea floor and stretching to shore. It's designed to refine technology for more ambitious projects by 2015. Wind giant Gamesa Energy USA, which is responsible for 20,000 megawatts of wind turbines worldwide, is developing the project. Virginia required the company to post a \$2 million bond to demolish the lone turbine if it is decommissioned and pay state royalties of more than \$52,000 for the use of state waters. The project also requires approvals from the Army Corps and Coast Guard to ensure it will not interfere with navigation routes, Marine Resources Commission spokesman John M.R. Bull said. The commission oversees recreational and commercial fishing in Virginia waters. "This isn't a race to be first, necessarily," Bull said. "All of state government has been working to see how it can be done best and in the most responsible way. The inclination is to move ahead unless there has been a problem identified. We've gotten no opposition to this project from anyone." But Bull said the state expects certain economic advantages to being out front. "Virginia has made this a very streamlined, very favorable permitting process to get things proposed built," he said. "If all goes as planned, this one turbine could be a harbinger for a whole new clean-energy industry in Virginia."

WALL STREET JOURNAL

Cabot, Williams Detail Damage To Pennsylvania Gas Compressor Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. (COG) and Williams Partners LP (WPZ) said they are investigating damage at a Pennsylvania natural-gas compressor after a flash fire hit the structure. The natural gas companies said no employees were hurt by the fire, which ripped through the Lathrop compressor station and quickly extinguished itself. Pipeline operator Williams said the structure holding the station seems to have borne the brunt of the damage, while the equipment and flooring inside remain in place. The cause of the fire isn't yet known. The compressor station has been handling about 365 million cubic feet of gas each day. Williams said the accident will not materially affect its earnings. The Lathrop compressor station is part of a web of midstream assets dotting Pennsylvania's Marcellus Shale formation, an area of rock that has yielded growing amounts of natural gas in recent years. Expanding production has pushed down prices, a boon for consumers that has hurt producers' top lines. Cabot shares were recently up 13 cents at \$13.38 after hours, while Williams units slid 10 cents to \$55.72.

BINGHAMTON PRESS AND SUN BULLETIN

Tioga County landowners want to frack with liquid propane A group of Tioga County, N.Y., landowners are poised to OK a deal that may jumpstart drilling in New York's Marcellus and Utica shale beds. Southern Tier Energy Partners, a newly formed organization representing about 2,000 property owners known collectively as the Tioga County Landowners Group, has signed a preliminary agreement with two companies that want to use an alternative to hydraulic fracturing drilling that employs gelled liquid petroleum gas instead of water. The landowners' group controls about 135,000 acres in Tioga County and is working with eCORP International and GasFrac Energy Services Inc.